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The Move to Clusters – Shared Leadership

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The Move to Cluster – Shared Leadership

Shared leadership is extremely important to the success of the Integrated Cluster model as there must be significant dialog between the administrative units and the clusters in evolving a structure that can grow, change, and be sustainable. This is a challenging step and will require us to rethink shared leadership and governance in the context of re-envisioning the University and moving to clusters, addressing the challenges these changes bring, and making our educational model sustainable and affordable—all with the realization that the world of higher education is changing so quickly that we will need to move to “where the puck will be”—not where it is today. As a University, together, faculty, OS, and PATs should consider whether we have identified and established appropriate task forces and working groups that may be necessary to effectively address process change and work with administration to determine the charges. We all will need to contribute to this process in whatever way we can.

- One of the first tasks of Clusters’ leadership teams will be to analyze the marketing and financial data on programs within the cluster and come to some decisions on how all programs might be strengthened through attention to curricular integration and reinvention (4 tools, etc.). Ideally, programs would not be cut if they could reinvent themselves possibly through integrated links to other programs, broadening their appeal. While combinations are preferred to eliminations, it is possible that some programs may not exist in the new Clustered model; thus, it is essential that re-envisioning all programs occur, not simply so that currently strong programs may help weak/economically inefficient ones survive, but so that even the strongest programs flourish in the future as times change. Each Cluster may want to revisit the original URSA analysis and consider it in the context of our Cluster based organization, as well as the marketing and financial data the Deans will provide in early November. In this process, we must be careful to hear the voice of smaller programs that can play a key role in growing the clusters and who desire to be part of new, vibrant cross-cluster initiatives.
- To strengthen programs, clusters might consider developing a two to three course/Gen Ed introductory sequence that would motivate students to pursue majors within the cluster, but also provide insight and pathways for students in majors outside their clusters. For example, Exploration & Discovery might develop a two course sequence. One course being the story behind great discoveries (history) and their impact and another great equations course in Physics (i.e. how these equations came about, what they mean, and how to use them). In

fact, a recent PSU experimental course, Self & Society (SSDI) Curiosity, Ethics, and the Public Good, appears to fit these parameters.

As always, please understand these blog posts are mine and I present things as I see it. Others I am sure will see things differently, but I hope some of this provides clarification and resonates with you.

October 30, 2017